

Marseilles, France
May 3, 1951

Progress Report No. 41 A

Mr. H. J. Anslinger
Commissioner of Narcotics
Bureau of Narcotics
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

This is my first report from Marseilles and my work here promises to be successful. Within 24 hours of my arrival here I met and negotiated with a Chinese for the ostensible purchase of 5 kilos of crude opium. I hope to arrest this suspect within the next few days.

I arrived here on May 1, 1951 and immediately reported to Mr. Marcel E. Malige, Consul General, and to his Administrative Officer, Mr. Joseph Nageski. Mr. Nageski is the individual who originally interviewed Mr. Dominique BORGHI, the source who allegedly has information relative to narcotics smuggling and the existence of clandestine heroin laboratories in Marseilles.

When source BORGHI was last in the Consulate General office he stated that his telephone number could be located in the directory. However, we were unsuccessful in our effort to locate him as the only person of that name in the directory is not our man. Through Mr. Roberto Pasquier, Inspector, 9th Brigade, I have learned that Berghi is one of the most important cigarette smugglers in Marseilles; that he has 4 previous convictions for this charge, although no narcotic convictions; that he was recently fined 1 1/2 million French Francs. Mr. Pasquier will secure the home address of Berghi for me by tomorrow.

CHANG HO left me but returned in a few minutes, entered the car and indicated for me to drive away. He took me to the neighborhood of Rue des Petites Marie 49, where I parked the car. CHANG HO instructed me to wait outside and he entered this two story dilapidated building. In a few moments he came out with another Chinese who said his name was BERNARD.

With BERNARD acting as the interpreter, we continued our conversation. CHANG HO said that the crude opium sold for 950,000 French Francs, roughly \$265.00 per kilo, which I was later informed by the police was about 400,00 Francs too expensive. I informed CHANG HO that I wished to purchase 5 kilos but he said that for that amount I would have to advance half-payment as a deposit. Naturally, I declined stating that I was only interested in a hand-to-hand cash proposition. We then decided that he would first deliver 2 kilos for which I would pay him, and that he would then return with the balance of 3 kilos. It was my plan to have him arrested upon the delivery of the first 2 kilos.

At CHANG HO's request, I wrote my complete correct name, the Hotel Grand address where I am residing and my room number. It was agreed that at 7 p.m. he would come to my room. However, he did not specifically state that he would make delivery at that time. Just prior to taking leave of CHANG HO and BERNARD, a third unidentified Chinese approached the car. CHANG HO got out of the car and talked to this Chinese. CHANG HO returned to me and asked me if I was an American policeman which I laughed off as a big joke. It appears that this Chinese may be the connection and warned CHANG HO to be wary of me. However, when I left him he promised to see me at 7 p.m.

At 5 p.m. Mr. J. Roland Jacobs and I went to the office of Mr. Culioli where I was accorded an unexpectedly cordial reception. There were 6 other apparently high-ranking officials present at this conference, among whom was Mr. Noel Mevel, who has several police titles but who is chief of the Mobile Squad, the 9th Brigade, comparable to Squadra Mobiles in Italy, dealing with major crimes.

The narcotic squad composed of 4 men, of whom Mr. Roberto Pasquier is the senior member, is under the supervision of Mr. Mevel. Mr. Mevel produced a letter recently received by him from Mr. Ducloux, INTERPOL chief in Paris, advising him of my future arrival in Marseilles.

I devoted the remainder of the evening until midnight in the company of Mr. Pasquier. We first went to his home where his 8 month pregnant wife, his 6 year old son and he reside in a squalid two room flat, reminiscent of filthy New York City tenements. This is a vivid reminder of the niggardly salaries paid European law enforcement personnel. When I see sights such as this I become tolerant, I can understand why the police never attracts high-class personnel; why conscientious police officers become progressively apathetic and disinterested in vigorous enforcement, etc.

Yesterday when I was with CHANG HO he told me that we had to exercise care since the police had recently made a seizure of 300 kilos of opium. Mr. Pasquier furnished me the details of this case. He claimed that one month ago the French customs made this seizure on the SS CHAMPOLION, a French ship, which had just arrived from Beirut. The opium was found in the hold of the ship and the customs police were unable to connect it with any crewmember. No arrests were made.

Mr. Pasquier claims that this load was destined for one Antoine CORDOLIANI who is the biggest and most important trafficker in Marseilles. He is a Corsican, as are almost all of the white, French traffickers. It is rumored that CORDOLIANI intended to have the opium transported to a suburb of Paris where he has a very large laboratory for heroin conversion.

Mr. Pasquier claims that about 2 years ago Customs officers at New York City seized 100 kilos of opium and 10 kilos of heroin on board the SS ST. TROPEZ; that this shipment was ~~marked~~ the property of CORDOLIANI who was going to sell it to persons unknown in New York City, probably members of the French-American traffickers in which Narcotic Agent Ciulliani has been interested ~~in~~ for some time.

I understand that the narcotic traffickers and smugglers in Marseilles are, in order of importance, French Corsicans, Indo-Chinese, and Chinese. Within the past 2 years or so, almost all of the opium smuggled into this port comes from Beirut. I am inclined to believe that this is true; that Beirut is the largest sore-spot. This is very easy ~~in~~ for me to understand since when I was in Beirut last year I could have purchased as much opium as I desired. Beirut is probably the port which receives the bulk of the opium smuggled out of Turkey, notwithstanding the feeble Turk arguments to the contrary.

This morning I had a conference with Mr. Malige, Consul-General, who incidentally among all of the Foreign Service officials I have encountered thus far this year as well as last year, is the most intensely interested in the narcotic problem. I sought his advice as to how best to proceed towards eliminating the present lenient sentences given to narcotic violators and to convince judicial authorities to impose the maximum penitentiary sentence of 2 years rather than one to 6 months. Mr. Malige informed me that when District Supervisor Garland H. Williams was in France in 1949, he put forth vigorous efforts in that direction but apparently to no avail.

Mr. Malige explained the situation in France whereby all Government policy, police or otherwise, is strongly centered in Paris; that the local municipal governments are guided almost solely by Paris dictates. I concur with the suggestion of Mr. Malige that in order to accomplish the aim of getting judicial authorities to impose maximum sentences and perhaps pass legislation increasing statutory punishment, you as the Commissioner of Narcotics and United States Delegate to the Narcotic Drug Commission, United Nations should make appropriate representation to your opposite number at Lake Success.

In the meantime, prior to my departure from Marseilles, Mr. Malige will take me back to Mr. Culioli when we will request him to arrange for an appointment to see the director of the Marseilles courts. At that time I will make an effort to indicate to that person the arguments that lenient penitentiary sentences are not a deterrent; that the addict population is progressively increasing; that the hordes of Arab, Indo-Chinese, Chinese and Corsican criminals currently engaged in major crimes may be under the influence of narcotic drugs; etc. etc. When I get to Paris I will request the Embassy officials to make an appointment for me to see the director of the courts there.

Inspector Pasquier has also told me that sometime ago he submitted a report which was transmitted to INTERPOL Paris who in turn sent it to Egyptian narcotic authorities to the effect that a man known as Joseph Le Grec (Joseph the Greek) was one of the most important narcotic traffickers at Port Said. This man boards incoming ships and using the ruse of being a money changer, sells narcotics and hashish to French seamen.

Pera had received the assurance of the manager of his Istanbul hotel that his mail would be forwarded to him at Lisbon.

It appears that these opium merchants probably replied to his letters but that the police, in line with their undercutting policy, intercepted this mail. In view of this development, I think it is useless for Agent Pera to return to Turkey.

Agent Pera speaks fluent French. It appears that there is a considerable amount of work here in Marseilles and I couldn't use Pera as an undercover agent. I have therefore sent him the following telegram today:

"Re your Sosa cable. Concur that useless you return Turkey. Immediately you complete Lisbon work meet me Hotel Grand in Marseilles".

Following is the telegram which I sent to the Bureau on this date:

"Pera says suspect Maria SOSA at Lisbon probably able supply only small amount heroin and pickings there slim. Has received no answers from letters sent Turk opium dealers in provinces there. Believes police intercepting his letters at old Istanbul address. Have instructed Pera come Marseilles work with me soon Lisbon work completed".

Respectfully,

Charles Siragusa

Charles Siragusa,
Narcotic Agent

cc: Mr. Marcel E. Malige
American Consul-General
Marseilles